

Message Text

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16

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00

FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 OFA-01 DLOS-03 L-02 /028 W

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R 252145Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3715

INFO PANCANAL

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRAN, PN

SUBJ: COMPLAINT ON WEST COAST U.S./PANAMA OCEAN SHIPPING RATES

1. ONE OF PANAMA'S LARGEST IMPORTERS OF STAPLE AND PROCESSED FOODS HAS REQUESTED EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN SECURITY EXPLANATION FOR ALLEGEDLY EXCESSIVE AND DISCRIMINATORY CARGO RATES ON LATIN AMERICA/PACIFIC COAST STEAMSHIP CONFERENCE (LA/PC). HE STATES THAT CALIFORNIA-PANAMA RATE IS CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN RATES ON OTHER VOYAGES FROM CALIFORNIA VIA PANAMA CANAL TO SUCH DESTINATIONS AS NEW YORK, PUERTO RICO AND SANTO DOMINGO.

2. OUR CHECKS WITH SHIPPING AGENTS HERE INDICATE INCREASES OVER PAST FEW YEARS HAVE RAISED LA/PAC RATES TO PANAMA FROM ABOUT \$35 TO \$100 (PER TON). RATE HIKE REPORTEDLY DUE TO STEEP INCREASES IN STEVEDORING (WEST COAST, U.S.), CREW AND FUEL COSTS. ONE LOCAL AGENT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT HIGH LA/PC RATES COMBINED WITH ALLEGEDLY HIGH CANAL ZONE PORT STEVEDORING AND HANDLING CHARGES PLACED U.S. WEST COAST EXPORTS AT SERIOUS COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE. HE ATTRIBUTED HIGH RATES IN PART TO "CO-CARRIER" OR THROUGH SHIPMENT SURCHARGES OF 14 AND 19.5 PERCENT AT CRISTOBAL AND BALBOA PORTS RESPECTIVELY. THIS PORTION OF RATES IS ALLOCATED TO LOCAL CARRIERS MAKING OVERLAND DELIVERIES TO CONSIGNEES.

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Message Attributes

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